

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

620

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center

Treasury Designates Al-Aqsa International Foundation as Financier of Terror Charity Linked to Funding of the Hamas Terrorist Organization

5/29/2003

FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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WASHINGTON, DC ♦ The U.S. Treasury Department has designated the Al-Aqsa Foundation as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) entity under Executive Order 13224. As a result of this designation by Treasury ♦s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), all assets of the Al-Aqsa Foundation are blocked and transactions with the organization are prohibited.

♦By designating the Al-Aqsa Foundation, we have deprived the Hamas terrorist organization of a vital source of funding and have shut off yet another pipeline of money financing terror. Today ♦s action demonstrates our commitment to prevent the perversion of charitable organizations for terrorist ends. ♦ Secretary Snow stated.

Al Aqsa is a critical part of Hamas ♦ terrorist support infrastructure. Through its headquarters in Germany and branch offices in the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, Pakistan, South Africa, Yemen and elsewhere, Al Aqsa funnels money collected for charitable purposes to Hamas terrorists.

Other nations, including the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Britain, Luxembourg and Switzerland, have also taken action against the Al-Aqsa Foundation.

The Al Aqsa Foundation is the 18th financier of terror disguised as a charitable organization designated by the Treasury Department. With today ♦s action, there are now 264 individuals and entities designated as SDGTs and over \$137 million in their assets frozen worldwide.

Further details on the Al-Aqsa Foundation are attached.

Background: AL-AQSA FOUNDATION

AKAs: Al-Aqsa International Foundation, Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Sanabil al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Al-Aqsa Sinabil Establishment, Al-Aqsa Charitable Organization, Charitable Al-Aqsa Establishment, Mu'assa al-Aqsa al-Khayriyya, Mu'assa Sanabil Al-Aqsa al-Khayriyya, Aqssa Society, Al-Aqsa Islamic Charitable Society, Islamic Charitable Society for al-Aqsa, Charitable Society to Help the Noble al-Aqsa, Nusrat al-Aqsa al-Sharif

The AL-AQSA FOUNDATION is a critical part of Hamas' transnational terrorist support infrastructure. Hamas is designated by the Secretary of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (66 Fed. Reg. 51088) and as Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons Who commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism." Hamas is known to raise at least tens of millions of dollars per year throughout the world using charitable fundraising as cover.

The AL-AQSA FOUNDATION, until recently headquartered in Germany, uses humanitarian relief as cover to provide support to the Hamas terrorist organization. Mahmoud Amr, the Director of the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Germany, is an active figure in Hamas. The AL-AQSA FOUNDATION also is known to maintain branch offices in The Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, Pakistan, South Africa, Yemen and elsewhere. AL-AQSA FOUNDATION offices are included in lists of organizations that contributed to the Hamas-affiliated Charity Coalition in 2001 and 2002.

Since the summer of 2002, authorities in The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany and the U.S. have taken administrative and/or law enforcement action against the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION and some of its leaders based on evidence of the organization's support for Hamas and other terrorist groups. Pursuant to a July 31, 2002 administrative order, German authorities closed the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Germany for supporting Hamas. In April 2003, Dutch authorities blocked AL-AQSA FOUNDATION assets in The Netherlands based on information that funds were provided to organizations supporting terrorism in the Middle East.

Criminal charges against some AL-AQSA FOUNDATION officials were also filed. On January 1, 2003, the Danish government charged three AL-AQSA FOUNDATION officials in Denmark for supporting terrorism. Also, the head of the Yemeni branch of the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION, Shaykh Muhammad Ali Hassan AL-MUAYYAD, was arrested for providing support to terrorist organizations including Al-Qaeda and Hamas in January 2003 by German authorities.

In Scandinavia, the Oslo, Norway-based Islamic League used the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Sweden to channel funds from some members of the Islamic community in Oslo, Norway to Hamas.

In late 2001 for example, a human courier was used to transfer funds from the Islamic League in Norway to the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Sweden. In another instance in 2002, money, gold and jewelry were collected by the Islamic League (in Oslo, Norway) and transferred to the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Sweden to be provided to Hamas.

At the Islamic League of Norway's annual conference held on May 18 and 19, 2002, the General Secretary of the Islamic League in Sweden urged all Muslims to provide support and to participate in continuing the suicide operations against Israel. He called for further financial support from all conference participants to the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Sweden, noting that this financial support could contribute to the destruction of Israel.

Strong ties have existed between the Hamas and AL-AQSA FOUNDATION offices in Yemen. Officials of the organizations met frequently and the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION was identified as a "Hamas-affiliate." As discussed in a previously unsealed FBI Affidavit, AL-MUAYYAD, the head of the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Yemen, has allegedly provided money, arms, recruits and communication equipment for Al-Qaeda. At least until AL-MUAYYAD's arrest, Ali Muqbil, the General Manager of the AL-AQSA FOUNDATION in Yemen and a Hamas official, transferred funds on AL-MUAYYAD ♦s orders to Hamas, PIJ or other Palestinian organizations assisting "Palestinian fighters." The disbursements were recorded as contributions for charitable projects. Through channels such as this, AL-MUAYYAD reportedly provided more than U.S. \$3 million to the "Palestinian cause".

HEAD OFFICE:

Aachen, Germany

BRANCH OFFICES:

Rotterdam, Holland

Copenhagen, Denmark

Brussels, Belgium

San ♦a, Yemen

Malmo, Sweden

Johannesburg, South Africa

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